



## FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES

February 7, 2025

National School Breakfast Week - March 3-7, 2025

Celebrating National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is more than an event—it's a chance to make a lasting impact on students' lives by showing them the power of a healthy start to their day.

This year's theme, "*Clue In to School Breakfast*," brings the fun and excitement of mystery-solving into the cafeteria. Together, let's celebrate the School Breakfast Program, which provides over 12 million healthy meals daily and helps build brighter futures!

Check out the [NSBW Resources page](#) for logos, toolkit, merch and more!



### Federal Funding Freeze Update

We are nearing (4-weeks out) of a potential government shutdown. This is a recurring event. Our office will closely monitor and distribute communication as appropriate if there will be an impact to Child Nutrition Program funding.

Washington Post is reporting that the OMB memo has been rescinded. "The White House budget office on Wednesday rescinded an order freezing federal grants, according to a copy of a new memo obtained by The Washington Post, after the administration's move to halt spending earlier this week provoked a backlash. In a memo dated Wednesday January 29th and distributed to federal agencies, Matthew J. Vaeth, acting director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, states that OMB memorandum M-25-13 "is rescinded." That order, issued Monday, instructed federal agencies to "temporarily pause all activities related to obligations or disbursement of all federal financial assistance."

While, the order was not clear if the freeze would have impacted Child Nutrition Programs, we were relieved to see the rescinded order.

### Important School Nutrition Requirements and Resources

### **Revised Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs**

The **Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs** (FBG) has been revised to reflect the final rule, "Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans". This important resource assists CNP operators, food manufacturers, and other stakeholders with purchasing the correct amounts of foods for CNP and determining the contribution that each food makes toward meal pattern requirements. The FBG is available as a Web Tool, Mobile App, and downloadable PDF.

### **Language Access Training Materials**

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Civil Rights Division (CRD), recently announced that the language access webinar and slides, focused on "**How to Bridge Language and Cultural Barriers with FNS support**" have been published! This training is specifically designed to guide FNS funded programs in better serving the needs of the communities they support. It presents valuable strategies for overcoming language barriers, leveraging the FNS language access framework, and provides practical tips to navigate common challenges in multilingual environments.

You can view both the recorded training and the PowerPoint slides by following this link: [\*\*Language Access Training | Food and Nutrition Service\*\*](#)

### **Updated! Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast Training Guide**



Team Nutrition's "Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast" training guide has been updated to be consistent with the Final Rule, "**Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.**"

The Final Rule allows schools the option to offer grains, meats/meat alternates, or a combination of both at breakfast. **This 20-page training guide** shows school nutrition professionals how to offer meats and meat alternates at school breakfast by providing menu planning ideas, crediting information, sample menus, and more.

[\*\*View in Spanish | Veá en español\*\*](#)

### **USDA Requests Public Comments on Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs**

In ***Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs***, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requests comments from the public. The request for information was issued on December 26, 2024, to obtain input to help inform future policymaking, guidance, and technical assistance related to grain-based desserts and high-protein yogurt crediting in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP).

**The public is invited to submit comments to**  
[\*\*www.regulations.gov\*\*](https://www.regulations.gov) **through March 26, 2025.**

On February 7, 2023, FNS issued a **proposed rule** to update Child Nutrition Program (CNP) meal pattern requirements. The rule included a proposal to limit **grain-based desserts** in the School Breakfast Program to no more than two ounce equivalents per week, consistent with the National School Lunch Program. However, based on public feedback, FNS did not finalize that proposed limit in the **final rule**, which published on April 25, 2024. Partners raised concerns that the proposal would limit options at school breakfast and recommended that FNS re-evaluate use of grain-based desserts at school breakfast. In the final rule, USDA committed to exploring methods for improving and simplifying grain-based dessert requirements by soliciting further partner input.

Yogurt is a popular menu item in CNPs. It may be offered in a variety of forms: plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened, strained or non-strained, and/or high-protein or regular; as a standalone option or in different menu items, such as yogurt parfaits or smoothies. The variety of yogurt available at retail and in the K-12 market, including **high-protein yogurt** (e.g., Greek and Greek-style yogurt), has grown and evolved significantly. Therefore, in 2017, FNS requested public input on whether high-protein yogurt (including Greek and Greek-style yogurt) should credit differently than regular yogurt. Those comments were mixed and, as a result, FNS maintained consistent crediting for all yogurt in the CNPs. FNS is now seeking additional public input to determine if any new information warrants a change to yogurt crediting in the CNPs.

#### **Additional Resources:**

- More information about the request for information can be found on the **USDA FNS website**.
- Comments can be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to **Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs** and follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

## **Farm to School**

### **Local Food for Schools (LFS) Grant**

Funding is still available for the LFS Grant during the 2024-2025 school year. Scan the QR code below to get started and apply!

#### **How to Apply:**

1. Review the training recording.
2. Complete the request for applications.
3. Submit written plan describing how you will spend the funds.

*Scan the QR code to get started!*



MO DESE Food & Nutrition Services  
foodandnutritionservices@dese.mo.gov

### **Missouri Crunch Off 2024**

Missouri took 4th place in the Mountain Plains Region Crunch Off for 2024! You can view the statistics of the events, crunchers, food and more on this [Missouri Crunch Off 2024 Report](#).



## Reminders and Important Information

### **Verification Report Due**

If you have not yet completed your Verification Report please do so immediately. Multiple notifications have been sent regarding the report which was due on December 15, 2024. Failure to complete this report will result in the withholding of future payments of reimbursement.

For guidance on the report please review the [Verification Report Guidance](#) or reach out to your regional Nutrition Program Specialist indicated on the [Contact Information](#) page.

### **Local Education Agency(LEA) rebid for Food Service Management Company.(FSMC)**

LEA's must rebid for a FSMC every five (5) years according to USDA regulations. There is a list of LEA's who need to start the process at [FSMC Contract Rebid List 25-26 School Year | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#). Several LEA's have begun the process and are in the bidding process. This requirement is for any LEA wanting to rebid the use of FSMC's. To begin the process, you must contact [Kyle Heislen](#) for a copy of the State approved RFP.

Reminders:

- LEA's must use the state approved RFP as it has all the USDA requirements.
- DESE must approve the RFP and advertisement prior to the advertisement being sent out.
- The RFP must be out for a minimum of 45 days (USDA prefers 60 days).
- LEA's must evaluate the RFP and justify the one they wish to go with.
- LEA's then send DESE the RFP to get State approval PRIOR to any signatures.

We will be individually contacting the LEA's who need to rebid but wanted to get this out as a reminder as well. Please contact Kyle Heislen with any questions or requests - [Kyle.heislen@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Kyle.heislen@dese.mo.gov) or 573-522-9849.

### **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Requirement**

In April 2022 Federal agencies transitioned from use of the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Child Nutrition Program Operators are required to have the UEI to receive payments from State agencies who administer the Child Nutrition programs on behalf of the Federal government. Child Nutrition Program operators including institutions, facilities, sponsoring organizations, schools, and sponsors are required to obtain the UEI to receive payments from State agencies. (2 CFR § 25.300 Requirement for recipients to ensure subrecipients have a unique entity identifier). Organizations will go to SAM.gov to request a UEI. Per 2 CFR § 25.300, it is a regulatory

requirement that Program operators, as subrecipients, obtain the UEI number and that State agencies ensure they have the UEI. Program operators who have already completed full SAM.gov registration have been automatically assigned the UEI. Action is required immediately to ensure your entity has an assigned UEI.

### **Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) 23-24 CEP Report**

Check out FRAC's newest report, *Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools — School Year 2023–2024*. This report contains national and state-level participation data for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for last school year.

*The top-level findings from this report include:*

- 23.6 million children attended a CEP school, an increase of 3.8 million children, or 18.9 percent, from the previous school year.
- 7,717 school districts had one or more schools adopting CEP, an increase of 1,298 school districts, or 20.2 percent, from the 2022–2023 school year.
- 74.3 percent of eligible school districts adopted CEP.
- 47,766 schools adopted CEP, an increase of 7,531 schools, or 18.7 percent, from the previous school year.
- 84.7 percent of eligible schools adopted CEP.
- One out of two schools that operated the National School Lunch Program in 2023–2024 used CEP to offer healthy school meals to all their students.

### **And Justice for All Posters**

*And Justice for All (AJFA)* poster printing is pending departmental clearance. Our office will inform LEAs when the new *AJFA* posters will be available. LEAs may continue using the 2019 *AJFA* poster for display.

## USDA Foods Update



**Kansas City – WAS HELD February 5, 2025**  
**HOA/KSDE/MO-DESE Commodity Expo and Vendor Showcase**

**St. Louis – February 18, 2025**  
**SFNDA/ISBE/MO-DESE Commodity Expo and Vendor Showcase**

**River City Casino**

777 River City Casino Blvd., St. Louis, MO

[View on map](#)

**[CLICK HERE to register for ST. LOUIS 2025 SFNDA/ISBE/MO-DESE Commodity Expo and Vendor Showcase](#)**



St. Louis discounted hotel room rates are available at River City Casino & Hotel ([book here](#)).

PROGRAMMING ● ● ●	
Kansas City HOA/KSDE/MO-DESE Commodity Expo and Vendor Showcase	St. Louis SFNDA/ISBE/MO-DESE Commodity Expo and Vendor Showcase
<b>Classes</b> 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM USDA Foods General Session Control that Portion Artificial Intelligence (AI) in School Nutrition Knife Skills Commodities 101 Cook-Chill Benefits	<b>Classes</b> 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM USDA Foods General Session Food Distribution: Understanding the Value Artificial Intelligence (AI) in School Nutrition Knife Skills Commodities 101 Creative Cooking
<b>Vendor Showcase</b> 11:00 AM-12:00 PM Directors Only 12:00 - 3:00 PM Open to All	<b>Vendor Showcase</b> 11:00 AM-12:00 PM Directors Only 12:00 - 3:00 PM Open to All



### **25/26 USDA Foods Packet**

The USDA Foods Packet is available on our [USDA Foods webpage](#). Our **LET'S TALK TUESDAY** webinar from January 21 - **"Unwrapping the Packet"** will be available on the [trainings page](#) soon with the recording and presentation slides. There will be a delivery fee for Direct Delivery and Fee For Service items this year. For public schools, the fee will be \$2.25. As always, non-public LEAs will pay the entire delivery fee charged by Gold Star Foods.

### **25/26 Entitlement**

Entitlement for the 25/26 SY will be lower than the 24/25 SY. This is based on the per meal rate provided by USDA, and the "Total Lunches Served" for 23/24 SY, and carryover from previous school years. As you begin to consider processing options for next year, please place entitlement dollars where they will be most impactful to your students and your program. Do not depend on Bonus entitlement as it will be limited, and continue to take advantage of the Bonus entitlement available this year.

### **Let's Talk Tuesday – Commodity 101** **February 11th - 2:00 -3:00 PM**

We are offering a webinar version of our Commodity 101 class featured during our Commodity Expos. This session will provide step by step guidance and helpful tips on completing the 25/26 USDA Foods

Packet. This session is great for new directors as well as anyone that would like to learn more about the USDA Foods Packet. There is also our **23/24 Commodity 101 session** posted on our USDA Foods webpage.



**NOI Bonus** – Bonus entitlement is still available for some processors. Please reach out to each processor for specific information on pounds available.

**Bonus Direct Delivery for 24/25 SY** - We are again offering Bonus Direct Delivery (brown box) items that you may select and add to your Gold Star orders. Once approved, Bonus items will be added to your Live Inventory and automatically shipped to your district on your next Gold Star delivery.

**Items currently available for Bonus include:**

- Chicken Fillets
- Sliced Strawberries
- Rice, Parboiled
- Peaches, Diced, Canned
- Tortillas, whole wheat

**PLUS** more items advertised by individual school districts!

To request bonus items, log in on the **Gold Star website**. On the left panel, click on Advertisements under the USDA Direct Delivery Header. Then request the item(s) you would like.

Starting in February, we will automatically ship Direct Delivery items that were requested on the USDA Foods Packet but not yet ordered. This is to prevent excessive force shipping at the end of the year. In February, we will automatically ship items that were requested on the packet for August-January delivery. We will email food service directors and/or authorized representatives to inform you of the items that will be shipped. If you have concerns about storing these items, please let us know so we can find a solution. If your district can no longer use the items, please advertise them for other districts to use. If no other district takes them, you will still be responsible for receiving them. Please reach out to us at [donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov](mailto:donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov) with any questions or assistance.

### **DoD Fresh**

As of January 5, 2025, customers are required to receipt FFAVORS orders **within 2 business days** of delivery (previously 5 business days) before a receipt is considered past due. As before, if past due receipts exist, ordering will be locked until past due receipts are processed.

If you have any school closings (such as due to bad weather or holidays), please remember to communicate (such as closings due to holidays or inclement weather) that will affect deliveries to C&C Produce via email [Jackie@ccproduce.com](mailto:Jackie@ccproduce.com) or text 816-304-7425.

### **Be Aware**

We have found that Gold Star has charged some LEAs a minimum order fee on their delivery invoices for their commodity orders. There is not a minimum order fee, so this should not be charged to your district. We are working with Gold Star to correct those that we have found, but please be aware that you should not pay a minimum order fee for your USDA Foods delivery. Please let us know if you have been charged, so we can make sure it is corrected. Contact us at [donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov](mailto:donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov) or 573-751-1706 to report this issue

### Past Newsletters

Missed a past newsletter or need to access them again? You can find them all on our [Food and Nutrition Services Newsletter page!](#)



The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Director of Civil Rights Compliance and MOA Coordinator (Title VI/Title VII/Title IX/504/ADA/ADAAA/Age Act/GINA/USDA Title VI), 5th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email [civilrights@dese.mo.gov](mailto:civilrights@dese.mo.gov).

This email was sent to

Please add to your address book to ensure our emails reach your inbox! If you'd rather not receive emails:  
[Unsubscribe](#) | [Report Spam](#)



